

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Science Advisory Board  
Executive Committee (EC)**

**Summary Minutes of Public Teleconference  
December 5, 2002**

**Committee Members:** (See Roster - Attachment A.)

**Date and Time:** 11:00 am - 12:30 pm (Eastern Time), November 5, 2002 (See Federal Register Notice - Attachment B).

**Location:** Room 6013 USEPA Ariel Rios Federal Building,  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20004

**Purpose:** The purpose of this meeting was to review two draft panel reports and discuss Board business. The two draft panel reports discussed were: 1) Affordability Criteria for Small Drinking Water Systems: An SAB Report; and 2) Recommendations on the FY2001 Scientific and Technological Achievements Award (STAA) Nominations: An SAB Report.

**Attendees:** Chair: Dr. William Glaze; (EC Members), Dr. Henry Anderson, Dr. Trudy Cameron, Dr. Maureen Cropper, Dr. Dominic Grasso, Dr. Janet Johnson, Dr. Rebecca Parkin, Dr. William Smith, Dr. Rhodes Trussell, and (other SAB Member) Dr. Lawrence Goulder

EPA SAB Staff: Mr. Robert Flaak, (DFO for the Panel), Mr. Fred Butterfield, Dr. Jack Koomyoomjian, Mr. Thomas Miller, Dr. Angela Nugent, Dr. James Rowe, Dr. Vanessa Vu, and Ms. Kathleen White.

Other Persons Attending: Ann Coddington, (EPA); Mr. Jeffrey Kempic (EPA), and Neil Shaw (Risk Policy Report).

**Meeting Summary:**

The discussion generally followed the issues and general timing as presented in the meeting Agenda (see Meeting Agenda - Attachment C). The meeting lasted until 12:30 pm on November 5, 2002

Welcome and Introductions:

Dr. William Glaze, the Chair, opened the session at 11:00 a.m. welcoming Executive Committee Members (Roster, Attachment A) and other participants, and reviewed the agenda (Attachment C). Dr. Robert Flaak, Designated Federal Official (DFO) reviewed the agenda and handled other administrative issues such as attendance. Dr. Vanessa Vu, Director of the SAB Staff welcomed everyone.

Review of Reports Prepared by Subcommittees of the SAB:

1. Affordability Criteria for Small Drinking Water Systems: An SAB Report.

Mr. Flaak informed the Committee that two of the EC discussants, Drs. Johnson and Trussell had made available information about their relationships to the topic under review. He and Dr. Vu had reviewed this information and found no conflicts of interest

Mr. Flaak introduced Dr. Lawrence Goulder, the Environmental Economics Advisory Committee (EEAC) Member who presented the Committee's report for review by the EC. Dr. Goulder recapped the charge, which called for the EEAC to review the economic aspects of the national affordability criteria used under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The panel found that the Agency's basic approach has merit and also identified several imitations in the basic approach.

The EC Discussants then provided comments. Dr. Rhodes Trussell complimented the panel and recommended approving reports with no changes. Dr. Smith stated that he was impressed with the quality of report, which was responsive to charge, and focused on the economic issues of concern. Dr. Johnson noted that it was particularly well written. She also suggested one clarification (labeling a diagram and defining the terms "MC and MB") little bit of explanation and noted that the panel had not responded to the question of how affordability criteria relate to size of risks.

Dr. Goulder thanked the Discussants for their comments. He noted that the panel would make changes to clarify the points Dr. Johnson noted.

The Chair then opened the discussion to comments from other Executive Committee Members. Dr. Trudy Cameron suggested that the report make clear that the safety standard for water focuses on equitable distribution of risks and identify what this means for economic analysis; that it clarify whether the term "affordability" pertains to the utility as an entity or the utility and its customers; and indicate of the economic analysis suggests that small systems might benefit from improved dissemination of information from the federal government concerning federal compensation and financial. Dr. Goulder agreed to change the document to include these points.

Mr. Thomas Miller, DFO for the Panel that developed the report, then introduced several staff from EPA's Office of Water. Mr. Jeffrey Kempic identified three points of clarification what had been raised in written comments provided to the SAB by Jim Taft of EPA (see Affordability Report Written Comments -- Attachment D). Dr. Goulder agreed to provide clarifying language on these points.

Dr. Trussell moved that report be accepted with changes noted by the Panel representative and the Executive Committee transmit it to Administrator without further review. Dr. William Smith seconded the motion. The EC voted unanimously to accept the report.

## 2. Recommendations on the FY2001 Scientific and Technological Achievements Award (STAA) Nominations: An SAB Report

Mr. Robert Flaak, DFO of the STAA Subcommittee, introduced the report. He noted that the report's recommendations were similar to those made last year.

Dr. Smith, a member of the STAA Panel, spoke of his support for the STAA program and voiced his concern that Agency doesn't publicize and support the program adequately. Dr. Vanessa Vu reported on conversation with the Agency Science Advisor, Dr. Paul Gilman, where they discussed a new format for issuing STAA awards. Instead of giving awards in context of large EPA awards event, they discussed presenting the awards to Agency scientists during the Agency Science Forum in May 2003, at an event to which EC members would be invited. Dr. Glaze noted that the STAA program was important and was not a fully utilized program in the Agency. EC Members agreed to the involvement of Members of the Executive Committee in such a session at the Science Forum.

Dr. Anderson suggested that it might be helpful if some analysis were done of a list of all Agency publications to identify candidate research that were appropriate for submission to the STAA program, but were not submitted. Dr. Vu agreed to mention this suggestion to Dr. Gilman.

Dr. Grasso then made several points. He noted that the report was inconsistent in referencing criteria for a "level 1 award." He also noted that one criterion in the "management science and technology category" was a strong hypothesis and he voiced concern that some engineering research is not hypothesis driven. He also noted a concern about the composition of the STAA Panel, which is primarily consultants, rather than SAB Members. Mr. Flaak responded that the SAB Staff is considering using the new panel formation process to form the STAA panel next year.

Dr. Anderson moved to accept the draft report with the minor modifications noted. Dr. Johnson seconded the motion. The EC voted unanimously to accept the report.

#### Discussion of Other Business:

Dr. Glaze then began the discussion of other business before the Executive Committee.

Mr. Flaak then touched on items that followed up on the EC's meeting on October 1-2, 2002. He noted that the January EC Meeting would receive briefings on the Cancer Guidelines, RfC and RfD methodologies, and Cumulative Risk. The EC would also receive an update on SAB projects. Dr. Vu noted that Dr. Herman Gibbs, the ORD lead for the Mercury Research Strategy could report in January in response to EC interest. She noted that EPA has a broad range of risk management activities underway nationally and internationally related to mercury and committed to providing EC members with an Agency fact sheet describing the activities, and if the EC requests, she can arrange presentations at the January meeting on the topic.

Mr. Robert Flaak introduced a discussion of a meeting held December 4, 2002 with stakeholders on the topic of restructuring the SAB. The purpose of the meeting was fact finding. Dr. Glaze stated that the SAB's Reorganization Subcommittee would meet face-to-face on December 11, 2002. He envisions providing EC members with a substantive report on the findings and options being developed by the Reorganization Subcommittee at the January EC Meeting. Mr. Fred Butterfield, DFO for the Reorganization Subcommittee, then briefly identified additional activities underway: a planned meeting with EPA technical contacts in January (which will supplement a meeting already conducted on November 13, 2002 Senior

Agency Offices through the Science Policy Council); additional meetings with contacts from the National Research Council and environmental science organizations in Washington; and a meeting with Congressional Staff. He noted that Dr. Glaze has also sent an email to SAB members, informing them about the Reorganization Subcommittee activities and requesting their input.

Mr. Flaak and Dr Vu then discussed upcoming events for the EC. At the EC meeting on January 14-15, 2003 in Washington, D.C., additional topics to be discussed (topics not identified above) include: planning for April 9-10 meeting, which will include retreat activities, review of two SAB reports (MARLAP, and disinfection byproducts reports), and briefings on homeland security, the Integrated Risk Information System, and regional application of the SAB's *Integrated Environmental Decision Making* Report. Dr Vu mentioned that the SAB Staff Office was planning EC meetings outside of Washington so that EC Members could visit an EPA regional office and an EPA lab.

Action items:

1. The EC approved, with edits, the report: Affordability Criteria for Small Drinking Water Systems: An SAB Report. The report does not require further review by discussants.

2. The EC approved, with edits, the report: Recommendations on the FY2001 Scientific and Technological Achievements Award (STAA) Nominations: An SAB Report. The report does not require further review by discussants.

At 12:30 p.m., Dr. Glaze adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted:

Designated Federal Official  
Respectfully Submitted:

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/Signed/  
Robert Flaak  
Designated Federal Official

Prepared by:

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/Signed/  
Angela Nugent  
Special Assistant

Certified as True:

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/Signed/  
William H. Glaze  
Chair

Attachments:

Attachment A: Panel Roster  
Attachment B: Federal Register Notice  
Attachment C: Meeting Agenda  
Attachment D: Affordability Report Written Comments